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Title Collected essays

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COLLECTED ESSAYS

VOL. II

COLLECTED
ESSAYS PAPERS &c
of
ROBERT BRIDCES

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LETTER ON ENGLISH PROSODY
& NOTE ON NEO-MILTONICS

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PREFACE

IN THESE REPRINTS of Robert Bridges' prose, the Oxford University Press are continuing the use of his phonetic alphabet.

Before this decision was reached, readers were invited to give their votes for or against it. The response was neither large nor decisive; a small majority were, however, in favour of completing the series in phonetic type.

M. M. B.

NOTES
ON THE
PHONETIC ALPHABET

COMPLETE TABLE OF THE VOWELS

accented.	unaccented.	accented or unaccented.	
			as in—
<i>a</i>			<i>father</i>
			<i>hat</i>
<i>a</i>			<i>ago, general, a</i>
<i>av</i>			<i>avtvmn, authority, a/ll.</i>
<i>e\</i>			<i>bed.²</i>
	a, y		<i>made, dw.</i>
			{ <i>abote.</i> (As a mute, denoting length of preceding vowel.) ³
			{ <i>htven.</i> (Vocalizing a liquid.)
			{ <i>zhe.</i> (Before a consonant.)
<i>ill</i>	?		<i>green recall the</i> (Before a vowel.)
	<i>i</i>		<i>It.</i>
			<i>mtyit, b[.</i>
	<i>i</i>		<i>hot.</i>
	<i>o</i>		<i>open.</i>
	<i>o</i>		<i>full.</i>
<i><v\</i>	<i>u</i>		<i>moon.</i>
			<i>mite.</i>
	<i>v</i>		<i>bvt.</i>
	<i>ov</i>		<i>hot/.</i>
			<i>lyricj pity.</i>

NOTES ON THE VOWELS

I. The form of this symbol was chosen to picture the sound that it stands for; viz. an imperfect *a*—one whose characteristic sound is blurred through being unaccented.

To read *paradox* and *Asia*, for example, may serve to remind a deliberate, careful speaker not to say *paradox. Asia*.

2. Some writers may choose to use £, in preference to , for certain syllables which carry a secondary accent only; thus, the last syllable in *tendernes, lihtheartidnes*:-

and for past participles, bearing a secondary accent, as *comforted, distributed*:-

also for certain words with the prefix Σx , *in*, &c.—if pronounced *EX* rather than *Sx*, even when the vowel is unaccented: viz. *ixampli expire*. Robert Bridges would have advocated this pronunciation and spelling; and in such words as the above, where the second vowel is undoubtedly accented, the reader would not be misled. A few other exceptions to accentuation of Σ are *index, content* &c.

3. The use of *e*, as a mute, sometimes to soften *c*, but chiefly to distinguish long from short final syllables, is explained in Prose V

Further it is permitted to write mute *e* at the end of certain monosyllables, which, by virtue of their sense, carry weight, even if their vowel be short by nature: thus *Love*, and occasionally *done gone*, &c. And we write *some* or *som*, according to sentence stress.

4. followed by *e*, as in *sincire, ziuse*, is accented, *iw* is accented as *infew, biwtiful*, and *in* as in *rial, dear*, &c.

For those who have not seen No. V, it should be explained that this symbol, ", stands for *i*, and ?? for *i* : , in the I.P.A. alphabet. It was the intention of the designer (R.B.) to approximate the shape to some form of *i*, which would in all probability be eventually substituted.

We write *book, look, &c* in order to change as little as possible the appearance of these common words. And, for the same reason, *trushfrut, &c*, instead of *troothfroot*: this cannot mislead as *y* (cons.) never occurs after *r* before *oo*.

Capitals are not dealt with. Proper names are unchanged and quotations given in the original spelling.

RULES
FOR THE EFFECT OF ON PRECEDING VOWELS
RULE I

In standard English,

The vowels, *a*, *??*, \S *o*, *u*, *u*, *oo*, and the digraph *av* (except *in cowry*) are followed by the sound of *e*, before *r*. In some words this sound is represented by the symbol *e* written before the *r* as in *aerate*, or after the *r* as in *fare*, *fire*, *more*, *pure* but often its presence is indicated by no symbol as in *Mary*, *steer*, *poor*.

RULE 2

In an orthographically closed syllable ending in *r*, or *r* followed by another consonant—

or has the sound of *aur(a/r)* *nor, fort.*

vr „ „ *err* *for, hort.*

ir „ „ *err* *stir, squirt.*

er „ „ *err* *her, herd, confer.*¹

Inflected and derived forms remain unaltered: thus, *stirrinforry*.

¹ *er* is always accented, whereas *er* is always unaccented.

R U L E

FOR THE EFFECT OF *w*, *wh*, and *qu* ON THE
FOLLOWING *a*.

In standard English,

a following *w*, *wh*, and *qu* has the sound of *o*:
thus—*was, what, quarrel*.

[Except before *ok*, *g*, *ng*, and *x*; as *whack, wag, wangle, wax*.]

THE CONSONANTS

The following are unchanged:

bdfhjklmnpqrstvwxyz.

c is soft before $\Sigma e ? ?? i \& y.$

c is hard before all other vowels and diphthongs.

g is always soft, thus *gem, manag.*

g " hard, " *go, get.*

s has four forms:

s as in *soft* (unvoiced) *s* as in *was* (voiced)

s " *sugar* " *s* " *measure* "

LIGATURES

n " as in *sing* *sh* as in *ship*

th " *thin* (unvoiced) *si* = *fh* " *Asia*

zh " *the* (voiced) *ci* = *sh* " *social*

wh " *what* *ti* = *sh* " *notion*

ch " *chin*

When *ch* or *Wh*, unligatured, are used at the beginning of a word, one of the letters is mute: thus, *Christian*, where *h* is mute; *whoo*, where *w* is mute.

Note. Phonetically, 5 symbols are unnecessary for the sound *sh* (*f*), but we retain all of them in use at present to avoid the otherwise unfamiliar appearance of words.

Several mute consonants are retained, thus: *twoo, answer; know, kn&fe; half, thawht.* Also *of* is always written thus, and not *ov*. But these are matters for personal choice.

XI

STUDIES IN POETRY

FIRST PRINTED

Times Literary Supplement

21 Nov. 1907

XI

STUDIES IN POETRY

W I T H growin, popularity of English pottry as a svbjtct for amnter study and middlcclass cvltur, such esseys as these¹ b§ Mr. stopford Brooke svppfy a practical mid; and, regardity his volum as a representativ text' book in zhe voge of literary criticism, wvn mty perhaps be permitted tu observe that some of he rots are deepenin,, and that zher appears a tendency tu suppli he want of a true method b§ expatiating on dovtful topics and capri' civs notions, and tu indvlge in vage metafor and semi' poetic languag. For instance, because dhe pons treeted of in zhis volytm—namely, Blake, Scott, Shelley, and Keats—wer all living at he beginninof he last century, we are iscorted intu he inevitable rot of he influence of zhe French Revolution; and he paramount question concerning hem if howzhey wer severally affectid b§ he revolutionary ideafs whervpon it if duly expleind zhat Blake began tu write before he Revolution and antici' pated it; hat of Scott and shelley, whoo wer more ixactly its contemporarief, the former abhor 'd and the

¹ *Studies in Poetry*. By Stopford A. Brooke. (Duckworth. 6s. net.)

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latter espovs'd its doctrins; while tu Keats, whoo came after, and 'had a tender love of being beautifu^l like the lilies', they wer matterf of absolute indifference, since 'when the wave of the Revolution ebbed, the ship of imagination was stranded on the shore of apathy

Agein, a,ll these for pods hav tu be svbsomd and differensiated vnder the hed of the naturalistic scool— zhatt if, of die writers whoo made a direct return tu netur in reaction from zhe artifeialitief of zhe French scool of the eihteenfh century. Mr. stopford Brooke here readvocates his old belief zhat the love of netur, as Shown inpoetry b§ description of external objects, was a Celtic tradition bravht tu 'London in Jamie Thomson'S pochet. Bvt since it wer monstrvs tu der§ve the Songs of innocence from Thomson 's Seasons, it if Shown zhat Blake's naturalism was rather a sypernaturalism, 'not so much the love of outward nature as of the spiritual life of which nature was but the sensible form; and this if true inoff, but the greiter includes the less. Scott, whoo, as if Shown, combind zhe Iove ofnatur with romantic placelore and historic association, m§ht hav biin dresst intu l§ne; bvt the avthor if here symhat vn' genervs tu his own fhiory, havin a/lredy told us zhat Scott, 'like the rest of the world of his time, had gained

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from the ideas which preceded the French Revolution the love of wild and solitary nature. . . It was everywhere afloat'. So it wud siim, after "all, zhat the English scool of poitry miht hav pley'd vpon 'the great harp of nature and man, the strings of which are made of the fibres of the human heart, and the sounding wood of which is nature herself', jvst as well without Thomson and hi; Celts.

Tu pass from the genesis of idias. Ther is in this book a good did concerning the genisis of poims. The poetic raptur is twice compar'd tu Moses strikin the rock; and, in speekiri) of Shelley's; ode to the West Wind, avr author sty; zhat hi 'can well imagine the first lines leaping from his lips in a moment—thought, emotion, metre, movement—all rushing together into a self creation. But he is more precise about lyrics and sons;: 'when a lyric rises into form in a great poet, it is always in fire that it rises. 'Again, the best songs are written not only when the poet is young, but when the nation round him is also young! Here the finomenal Blake ha; wonce more tu be negosinted, for 'the age in which he lived was outworn; but it i; expleind zhat 'hefelt that impulse of the Revolution before it came'. This sum; tu be workin the Revolution a little too hard. THE vncertanty of the method i; well expo; d when our avthor

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catchis Ruskin caperin on zhis boggy ground. 'The prevailing temper of Scott's poetry is sadness', he writes; 'Ruskin says he was sad, and alleges that the age was sad, and Scott, representing it, became sad.' But Mr. Stopford Brooke wil hav none of zhis; fa seys zhat 'the age was not at all sad', and zhat zhe general sadms of Scott's poetry was due tu 'his apartness from the fresh movements of his age. A man cannot write poetry away from the main drift of his time without feeling his isolation, and the more sympathy he possesses the more he feels his isolation to be sorrowful'. A critic wich a truer method wudprobably sey sumthin of zhis sort—namely, zhat Scott was not sad, and zhat zhe lovly tendernis of his ehgiac note in landscap isfriquent because hefovnd zhat fa cud iisily produce it, l§ke my svnset'painter's man' nerism; but zhis miht be stron meet for a girls' class in an extension lecture, *The ethical criticism of art is no rod; it if nothin but pitfavlles.* Carlyle, in his Essey on Burns, iiven Carlyle, because of his wvn§ed ethical outlook, never came neer ike mark. Stevenson, writin on zhe same subject, respectfully preises Carlyle's preise of Burns, but immudiatly thrvsts it all as'yde and seys zhe riht thin) in plein terms. Carlyle had apologetically askt, 'Is it strange that his poems are imperfect?' and

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zhen sect, it is not chiefly as a poet, but as a man that he interests and affects us. But Stevenson, 'There was never a man of letters with more absolute command of his means; and we may say of him, without excess, that his style was his slave. . . . it was by his style and not by his matter that he affected Wordsworth and the world. . . . if Burns helped to change the course of literary history, it was by his frank, direct, and masterly utterance, and not by his choice of subjects'.

wicha sufficient dose of salt Mr. stopford Brooke's volume my bepreis'd; indiid, ifhe follow'd riht methods he cud only doo well; for he if an enthusiastic Iover of poietry,wizlt afine taste and true instincts, tu which his book barf witnes hru'aut—wvn miht sey without ix'ception if hi had not wisht tu siim tu preife shelley's socialistic rimes. His apprtciation of Blake if worthy and very welcom, and zht extracts from him are con'vincinly well thosen. His feifhful devotion tu zhe lovable Scott if genuin and infectivs, and he has dun good service bi insistin on zhe real bewty of zhe bestpassages in Scott's narrativ poims. His analysis of these are concise and useful; and zho' ht expleinf zhat hefeels a scruple in analisin zhe bewtiful, yet ht if quite at his best in zhatt kind of work. He expleinf his attitude in

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these words: 'when it [criticism] seeks to find out faults, I never think it worth much, but if it is done at all, it ought to be done well, and above all in a spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we should also be tempted to write.' It would have been delightful if Aristotle had said this when lecturing on Homer. Mr. Stopford Brooke's analysis of Shelley's ode to the west wind would be very useful to students; but it shows an avoidable simplicity in supposing that the labor of construction which he discovers was not fully present in the mind of the poet. He calls it an 'unconscious logic, and so in another place speaks of 'the unpremeditated excellence of the contrasts' in *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and again of the 'exquisite and unconscious skill' in *Isabella*. He points out very well that 'there is a logic of emotion as well as of thought'. This is a true and useful remark, and might have been expanded by showing what some of the laws of this logic are; but this suppose that when the artist exhibits it best, he is not aware of it, filling and attending. The psychology of what is called inspiration is difficult—how far the element that is due to 'subconsciousness' may in any given case have been consciously or unconsciously modelled or reformed; and in the mutual workings of the conscious and subconscious, supporting that their fields could he

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separated, zhe varptief of interaction must fa infinit. Moreover zhe most automatic conception of a work of art has tu pass thru 'solona passag of consivs manipyila' tion before it is fully transfer d tu its ixpresion in eny maturalial zhat zhe artist in zhis process mvst as an expert fa suppos'd tu hav been consivs of whatever excellence a critic mey discvver.

Won whole essey if divoted tu shelley's Epipsychi'dion, and meny wil fa glad of zhe assistance, zho' zhey must fa content tu find that svme of zhe personal allusionf are still vnidentifid. An account of shelley'f impersonation of zhe 'ideal Beauty to which he aspired to unite himself if patiently workt out, hav 'he created an Epipsychidion—"a soul out of his sour—a heightened, externalized personality of himself, conceived as perfect; an ideal image of his own being; different in sex; his corny plement; originally part of him, now separated from him; after whom he pursued; whom he felt in all that was calm and sublime and lovely in knowledge, in nature, and in woman; and to absolute union with whom he passion'ately aspired'; and hav hi c&Wd it Emily for fhru wuks. Shelley if a Ivvable crutyir, bvt can only fa so tu zthose whoo recognize zhat hi was not altogezher responsible for all his condvct. Any vzher kind of apology condems him.

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The last essey, on Keats, handles perhaps zhe most difficult svbject zhe author has undertaken tu. interpret zhatt poet's mind and zhe growth of hisideas.. Ther if so much hidden miinin in Keats's poims, and it i? so difficult tu extract, zhat we are grateful for my contribyi' tion?; and Mr. Stopford Brooke appearstu hav made some. in -die man hi? account wil be recognizd a? truthful, but not all his distinction? are convincin,. Ther i?, hauever, muchthat i? good, and zhe sympathy wizh which hi writes of zhe different poims is iluminatiri. Thus he speeks well of zhe 'subtle, separate, scented atmo' sphere of zhe Isabella,'which enters into every line of the poem, and isolates into its special air the imagina tion of every reader'. And of The Eve of St. Agnes, 'the story has the immense merit of improbability'; and, Agein, 'The poem is like a crystal sphere in which changing imageries arise and pass away, incessantly shifting; and it is surrounded by an aura of its own that isolates it in poetry, indeed, this is a characteristic of all the best poems of Keats! He writes of Lamia a? if he thvrvly understood zhatt ponn; but if hi did, it i? tanta' Iizin zhat hi? interpretation thud be so condens; it rvns zhvs:—'The ancient serpent superstition which came from the Aryan home is linked to the love of woman, to the

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decay of sensuous joy, to the misery of fate. The reason of the world is against the isolation sensuous passion creates; and its beauty challenges doom, when science concentrates this reason of the world, without pity, on such beauty, it withers away. Those are the thoughts of it.' This if obscure, and zher if som of zhe same sort of obscurity, occaisonolly grammatical, in his interprttation of Hyperion. A passag which promises tu make a good point reeds asfollowf:—'Keats, in the words of Apollo, there describes the passion for knowledge of all human history which has seized on him, and of which he desires to sing; but chiefly for knowledge of what men have done and suffered, created and destroyed, aspired to and failed in. He is torn and rent by the passion of it.' This sort of writin if provokirn, and mey jvstif§ a revewer whoo Shrinks from zhe labvr of disentanglin zhe truth and originality from zhis stvdy, which if he result of patient work, zho' zhe author deliverf his opinion too lihtly as tu what Keats hud and wud hav done. But zhe book itself if not large invff for zhe svbjtcts brodht in it; and its limits must be rememberd, lest in speekin of its im perfectionf we forget tu be grateful tu zhe writer for all zhat he has given vs.

XII

THE SPRINGS OF HELICON

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1 April 1909

XII

THE SPRINGS OF HELICON

NEARLY half a century has passed since Matthew Arnold broke the Aristoteelian tradition of the chair of Poetry at Oxford, and by a course of memorable lectures set a new model to his successors, more congenial now than to them and to their audiences, but becoming, more and more difficult and exacting as, with the growth of Oxford, a company of hearers has assembled with wider tastes and attainments than could easily be matched elsewhere; indeed, there if no conceivable combination of excellences which could be in excess of their demand. Arnold at once stroke magically transformed a pedantic and scolastic exercise into a living expression of modern culture; but in styling himself he did not consider those who might follow him. Among them all none has ever seemed to combine the qualifying gifts more conspicuously than Mr. Mackail; he deservedly a favorite, and the University if to be congratulated on its professor. He has now published the lectures of the past two years of his professoriat in a volume the title of which, *The Springs of Helicon*,¹ if

¹ *The Springs of Helicon. A Study in the Progress of English Poetry from Chaucer to Milton.* By J. W. Mackail. (Longmans. 4s. 6d. net.)

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a happy hit, exactly in die qht kee. it if borrow'd from Gray'? ode, and he meens it zhat hewil trace the mazy rills of English poitry tu their Heliconian sorce.

Tor this porpos hetakes Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton as the thru theefthannels, and discosses them severally in their relation tu three greit upoks of European reneis' sance, and agein in dieir rdation tu dhe man cvrrent of English poetical tradition, and agein as original pons, in this last department he silks critically tu distinguish the best work of iich, and estimates it with respect tu the masterpiicis of the world; he also draws avt their personal carateristics intu sume sort ofportrat; and all this if done, within the limits zhat his Short lectyirs allow, wich thatt abvndant lernirn and attractiv stile which he has tavht vs tu look for in hif work. it if not a task for a revewer tu follow in diital; and the skeme of it tuches poetry on so meny sides zhat won cannot ixpect zhe inqsiv jvdgments of which he is so prodigal tu fi t tugezher very closely, or tu be quite feir svbjects for separat criticism. Taken tugezher, hauever, zhey consti tute a body of opinion on which the value of the book must vltimatly rest, and in svbmittin a few of his ivdgments tu discvzion we make no apology for thoosin some which siim most piculiar and open tu objection.

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*Tu begin wiche chaucer. of Troilus and Creseide
we heren reed zhat 'it is a consummate masterpiece, one of
the few large perfect things in our literature. . . . The
figures breathe and live; this is true not only of the two
principal characters, but of all . . . nothing in modern
creative work is more subtly delicate in its psychology'
This jvdgment wil scarcely mat wiche vnqualif§'d assent.
Admittiri) tu zhe full zhe delicat poetic bewty of the last
book, ofuthidh Mr. Mackail sympathetically seys zhat he
can hardly trust himself tu speek, an objector wil orge
zhat zhe reesonn which the pom if so little known if
because so few reeders hav bun able tu wade thru the
txtensiv pandarics of the erlier books; and if won thud
dutifully hav accomplisht zhis, yet whatever sympathy
he mey hav for Troilus at zhe end, hefeels zhat hi if wiipin
for an ass, and zhatt too in spite ofeny covnter'afurance
in zhe narrativ. Then, as for creseide, wh§le Mr.
Mackail wonderf at chaucer s' 'sweet grave pity' for her,
and seys zhat wvn has tu tvrn tu Dante for its parallel, it
wud appear tu most ruders zhat zhis pity if merely
common jvstice, for zhe poor girl has been grossly
wrond; nor can we redily §deal§ze a pasion zhat has
bun so managd and handled. Tu cvm vpon a free
translation of Per correr miglior aqua at zhe beginnin*

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ofzhe second bock (as introdvction tu zlie more svcessful stage of pandarism) makes won sm§le at zhe amazin impudence of chancer's methods. Mr. Mackail, whoo goes fully intu the matter, tell; vs that chaucer 're models the story most often by thinking intensely over it.' But if it is true of his Creseide zhat 'in the full sense without reservation she is like one of Shakespeare's women', zhen Surely it if essential zhat the thud be a meid; wheras chaucer inconsideratly blunders litre, not only makin, her a widow, but recklisly addin that the mey hav had Children for all he knew or card. Agein, chaucer's nonchalance if feirly contrasted with zhe 'more laborious art' of vzher poets. Bvt, tu take wun example only, what cud be more laborivs zhan tu translate 120 lines of a Latin treetis on free-will intu English stanza tu make a pasionat speedifor Troilus when he hears zhat Creseide if tu lave Troy? Or if zhis a recipe for makin Shakespearian characterf? Moreover, in zhe middle ofzhis soliloquy, uftien he if' disputing with hint' self, he parenthetically, in chaucer 's well-known manner, apologizef for borin an imaginary avdience, and promises not tu detein zhem much longer. Possibly Mr. Mackail's pre-Rafaelite leenins make him kindly disposd tuwwards zhis sort of imperfection; but he if

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*Usually genervs tuward; whatever fa i; ingagd on.
This indulgence overflow; tu zhe twoo stanza; quoted
from Boccaccio on p. 29, which fa asures us are of
'extreme beauty', what doo words man? After the
skilful disposition of som sweet Italian names which
makes the first stanza we come tu these words—*

e molte
Di lui cognate e parenti raccolte.
ciascuna a suo potere il confortava,
E tale il domandava che sentia.

Uarmonivs rill i; perhaps not a bad name for zhis.

*In spite of zhese objection;, Mr. Mackail's; general
exposition of chaucer leeves nvthin tu be desird, if only
fa wud not, in the interests of h§h poetry, scruple tu
admit, what fa so well sees, zhat chaucer; greit svcess
ley in zhe humanity of hi; sketdhi; from life, and zhat hi;
hiher fights wer mostly zher translation;, or tasks
from uflidi fa gladly iscapt. Hi; most delicat tuthes,
too, are generally bravd humanitie;, a; for instance (we
are expaiiatity nau, not critiqzin), when Creseide in'
sists that her theef sorrow in Ieevin Troy is zhe zhavht
of zhe distress zhat it wil cav;e tu Troilus. This i; not
a personal treit, but generic; most truthful, but in ike*

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natyir of all affectionat wimin. The effect effect, too, which if obteind b§ Troilus and pandarus Watchin for Creseide'f return is of the bravdest and most universal t§pe. its delicacy dñes not l§e at all in its caracter§zb tion of zthose twoo men, bvt in zhe transmutin tendernis of chancer's human tuch. Mr. Mackail wud drive as back from zhe Canterbury Tales tu 'the exquisite narratives in the Legend of Good Women'..

We next come tu Spenser. He if treeted in a more personal manner, and zhe appreciation is comphte. 'His unmatched fluency of melody ... his lavish intricate beauty ... his immense poetic flexibility ... amazing profusion and variety in style as well as in language... He is the most inexhaustible and various of all the English poets', yet he 'was not in the first order of poets ... had an almost complete absence of humour... a want of touch between life and art ... utter absence of the Greek quality, and of the dramatic and narrative gift'; and in sp[te of zhis last he if likend tu Livy, in a com' parison zhat awokenf some curiosity. Svddenly (on p. 102) we come vpon zhis:—If Nicholas Bottom did not marry till middle life, his son might very well have handled a pike at Naseby'; and before we hav recoverd from the effort of rjectin zhis Bottomles hipofhisis we

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rud of zhi Epithalamion zhat for' certan qualities it easily takts the first place among all English odes'. And this wil startle a/l ruderf whoo happen, as we did, tu take for' tu meen by virtue of, and not in respect of— zhatt if, not as jvstification but as qualification of the preise; but iiven wer its poetical content more imaginativ, liven zhen it if davtful whezher it wud conker zhe fastidium which if cavsd b§ its vndyie lenth; vnfitted zhatt if tu zlie rilation of zhe sptiker wizh his subject. An averag bridegrcom discorsin of his own happenis miht be ixpected tu be zhvs prolix, but zhe realism if vncall'dfor in his ode.

The third section of zhe hook if divotid tu Milton, and if bas'd on an apprntiativ character sketch of zhe poit, exicytid not wizhavt such a svcessful rhetoric as an Oxford aidience mvst hav injoy'd. The first half of zhe first dchapter if afyne contribution tu Miltonic literature. The motiv of pride, which Mr. Mackail aspns tu Milton tu explein his printin all his worser piices, if well imagind and persuasivly put, andfalls in wizh the rest of his pictur, iiven zho' we mey not accept zhi account as complete and f§nal. His remarks are generally just, and his illvstrations illuminatin, yet he appears svmtimes tu miss or confuse zhe simple aspect of zhe

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matter. As when he insists zhat it is the sustained and all but faultless perfection of the execution ... the flaw less excellence of the workmanship' which distinguishes Paradise Lost, zhe tryifh if misst. He thud hav sed zhe stile of zhe execution; and zhatt, as zlu analogy of peintity wud illvstrate, if n different fhiqfrom what if expressst in hisfrases, havever intended. So zhe point of Milton 's isolation—which if picturd b§ an imag, quoted from sum poet, whose description dves not identif§ him tu vs, of a lonely eegle on a mauntanHop hfore davn—/s made at too greit a sacrifice, in wizh' drovity Milton from all relation, it denies zhe existence of enyzhin) that we shud be interested tu know; and it leeds zhe lecturer tu sty zhat 'he gave no impulse to letters, except that impulse received by all true artists when they see and recognize consummate art. Mr. Mackail if, of cors, thinkin only of zhe eihteenfh cen tury: we had almost forgotten it, and wer {hinkin how Milton connects Shakespeare wizh Keats, hav he finally modern§zd and mefhod§zd Chaucer; metrical inven tionf; hav he has been zhe strongest and most endnrin of all infiuences on zhe subsequent progress of English poetry.

The professor if himself a poet; and we fancy'd zhat

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*we had svnt§mes detected him with both feet off zhe
ground, in zhe last lectur zher is actual aviation. We
interpret zhe vlimbnt section tu meen that hewil return tu
erth in order tu discuss Dryden, Pope, and vzherf before
speekin of more heavenly thins. whatever his thoice
me be, we can trust him t us t if§ it in his performance.*

XIII

WORDSWORTH AND KIPLING

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WORDSWORTH AND KIPLING

No poet ever took himself more sarivsly than did William Wordsworth; havever wide hi; avtlook, he livd as a sectary in a clo; d system, and imagind that what' ever he happen d tu think wa; of primary importance. He compare; hi; twoo dhuf poim; The Prelude and The Excursion, tu die nave and quire of a Gothic cafhidral, and hi; m'ynor pom; tu the thantries and thapel; that border the§les. The feelings with which as christians, we contemplate a mixed congregation rising or kneeling before their common Maker' (thvs hi; frend Coleridge explein;) fMr. Wordsworth would have us entertain at all times as men, and as readers.' He wud probably hav (havht a complete concordance tu hi; wvrks inevitable and necessary, so we mey congratulate hi; hade on the sort of honorary degree diat die con cordance Soc§ety ha; nou conferd vpon him. A;for dieir very useful hooki dhe most remarkable fhin about it is the editorial statement that dhe whole task of prepar in the copy was accomplishtin seven mvnths. Until*

A Concordance to the poems of William Wordsworth. Edited for the Concordance Society by Lane Cooper. (Smith, Elder. 425.)

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concordances shall be made b§ masheenery, this must be consider'd a; good time. But it follows zhat zhe work is not a filological but only an alfabetical index of words 'Honeybees', for instance, and 'Saint Bees' are onder the same hedin, and St. Bees' if also under 'saint,' while 'Bees', af zhegenitiv plural of 'bee', has a separat hedin bi virtue of its apostrofe. No intelligence if niided tu make a concordance of zhis kpnd, and uflien it if made it mvst h, w? reckon, about for tpmef zhe bvlk of zh? original wvrk. we cannot be infhyifiastic over suds a performance. Moreover, Wordsworth wud not stand very hih in a list of English avfhors rankt accordin) tu the importance of their vocabylaries. But a reesonably made dictionary of the languag of enygreit writer wud r?qu§re, both in zhe selection of words and in the analysis of zheir meanins, a greit deel of expert lernin and literary intelligence; and experts hav nizher zhe lefvr nor zh? inclination for svdh vnpeid toil.

Fate havin placed on avr Jhelvef alongside of zhis book a Kipling dictionary,¹ we wil not divorce zhem. rher can hardly be twoo avfhors more different zhan

A Dictionary of the Characters and Scenes in the Stories and poems of Rudyard Kipling, 1886-1911. By W. Arthur Young. (Routledge. 8s. 6d.)

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Wordsworth and Mr. Kipling, but zheir thance jvxta position svggests a comparison which wud not vzherwife hav arisen; and, zho' the feet of sittirn at wonce on zhes twoo widely separated stoolf if impossible, we can at lust spin a fhred between zhem. The (hred is zhis. Wordsworth in his famos preface tu zhe Lyrical Ballads contended zhat poetic diction thud be token from rvstic spttdh. Coleridge (hreM zhatt matter out wizh svme perspicacity, bvt managed, afit wud sam, tu strike awa from zhe real issue. We shud sty zhat zhe man actual significance of -Axe debate was zhat poetic diction shud be living. The lamented Mr. Synge, in his preface tu The Playboy of the Western World, restates dhe thesis in his own wey, and writes, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old wicklow house where I was staying, that let me hear what was being said by the servangirls in the kitchen! it if neassnry, he contends, for a poet artist tu hav a rich, copivs, live languag, 'whereas modern poetry is either absolutely removed from real life, like Mallarme, or deals with the realities of life in the joyless, pallid words of Ibsen or Zola'. New, if we regard Kipling's erly work, zher seems tu be a consensvs amon zhes three original writers; for in seekin tu

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escape from convention} zhey allflb tu the idioms and actual converse of common folk. And zhis if only anvzher aspect of the filclogical dictom zhat a decyity speech is capable of dialectic rgeneration. The resvlt of Mr. Synges' experiment was a very welcom freftines and a gracivs bewty of motion, which his geenivs made zhe best of; but zhe tharm of it soon palls,, and its strangenes becomes itself a mannerism more manner d zhan zhatt which it svplanted. The greiter the detight which we fed in such a novelty zhe sooner wil it pass.

The st§le my be zhe man, but we wish here tu dissociate zhe twoo and speek only of die st§le; and we wud say zhat in eech of zthese three wr§ters the man motiv was tu get at svmfhinfreth. it if true in a, ll art that when a greit master appears he so exavsts the mateerial at hif dis' posal as tu make it impossible for any svceedin artist tu be original, vnless he can §ther find new mateerial or invent svm new method of handlin zhe old. in peintity and music zhis if almost demonstrable tu the vnintiated; in poetry the lav my not be so strict, but it still holds; and eny wvn my see zhat seerivs rime if new exavsted in English verse, or zhat Milton 's blank verse practically ended as an original form wch Milton. Ther are abvndant sins zhat English syllabic verse has lon been in

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*zhe stage of artistic ixavstion of form Mdh follows
greit artisac adieevement Nov a? far a? regard? die
vzrse'form Wordsworth was apparently vnconsivs of
zhis predicament it never occvrd tu him zhat fa wa?
wvrkity with blvnted tool?. Hi? §dea was tu purify the
diction and revivify English poetry b§ puttin a new
content intu the old verseform; and twoo reeson? my
be given for this conservati?m. First, that in his time
an artificial sccol of poetry had szpawted itself off from
zhe older tradition, so zhat eny retvrn tu the older stile
appeared tu be a fre/hnes; and, secondly, he was a part
of zhatt vnaccavntoble flvd of inspiration which in
Keats and Shelley and in a few of Coleridge's lyrics
transcended in some v§tal qualities ufhatever had been
done before, and actually wravht miracles of original
bewty within the old form?; but these bond'breikity
efforts, we /hud sy, more zhan completed zhe exavstion,
wh§le dhe teedivs quality of mvch of their work shows
vnder what hamperin condition? the geenivs of die?e
poets atteind excellence. Keats speeks very pleinly; he
sty?, for instance, that he relinquishthis Hyperion
becav?e he cud not get aweyfrom Milton; and Mr. Synge,
tho he wrote but little verse, seem? tu hav been fully
consivs of the poetic situation; indeed, he thavht it so*

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desperat af tu question whezher 'before verse can be human again it must not learn to be brutal'.

Followin zhis general line, let vs examin Mr. Kip' ling} method and its refvls; bvt tu avoid misvnder' standing it wil be well at the outset tu determin zhe limitation of owr inquiry. Mr. Kipling'sgnivs is very varyd, and zho^j he haf written mvfli verse he ha? wvn hi? reputation dheefiy b§ his prose talef. New we shall concern ovrselvelf only wizh his verse, and only with the stile and diction of zhatt. wizh Mr. Kipling, then, nvhin in diction if common or vncleen; nor can we draw eny strict line tu separate zhe diction of such poems as The Barrack-room Ballads, ushidh are professedly and wholly in zhe low dialect of zhe car acters, from zhofe vdier poemf ushere it if not so prominent nor so evidently in place. A good meny poemf, it if true, are entirely free from it; but zhesere radier show the avfhor'f liberty tu take vp wizh vkatever manner he my thoose; and their conventionalities of rime and diction, from which not eeven the obsolete if rejected, are not tu be reckon' d amvn his inventions. Nov as veehiclefor zhis kind of diction (which need not be more needy describ'd) he chooses the Elizobee(han ballad stanza, die nvrsery rime, die popular son), and uftiatever vzher accentual lilt he my

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divfae of a similar caracter, and wizh zhtfe material risorcif (of diction and mutre) hi wil trut almost eny svbjtct. As nn example tu txhibit zlie rifvlt we wil take The Looking Glass, in Rewards and Fairies. In zhis masterly poim zhe motiv if hiroic and almost tragic. Greit Quttn Bess if portryd wizli zhe van wuman'f vanity and zhe tyrant's bad conscience, and wicth a vast pride, sufficient tu dravn zhem both; and the pictur if done wicth such force zhat meny needers wil hav the for stanzas b§ hart when they hav red them twice. Nov observe the diction; the first line rons thus:—

*The Queen was in her chamber, and she was
middling old.*

This if of corse fovdned on

*The Queen was in her parlour eating bread and
honey,*

and the kii of the motion if zhvs diliberatly pitcht at the level of the nonsensical nursery rime. observe, too, zhe ixpresion 'middling old' This sets die Queen dovn amon the homeliest of her subjects; bvt in so dooin) it my humanize and provoke common sympathy. Later on Lord Leicester's ghost comes 'scratching and singing at the dore, which degrades the ghost; and yet, in spite of

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those thins, the whole has an irresistible force, so zhat ovr dislike of the incongruities, if we fid eny, if over paver d; and zhis force, zho' it mey not be due tu zhe apparent obstacles, my sum zhe greither for its victory over them. That 'was' (= woz) is rim'd in the refrein wich 'lass' if a convention no davt congtnial tu the nvrsery rime, and wt only mention it btcavfe it if not vtherwise reconcilable wizh Mr. Kipling 's method, which at its best refuses the foolish inversions and bad rimes that lower the standard of so meny of Words' worth's scohstic stanzas, because they are conventions of another scool, retein'd for obvivs convenience—mere resorces of imperfect execution, (criticism of this poem cannot omit notice of the frase 'her sins were on her head', which must be reckon as a slip in artistic accomplishment, because, since the Queen if lookin at herself in the mirror, won if too consivs of her actual hed tu escape visualizin) at wonce some sort of bundle on the top of it. This b§ the way.)

Nov svppose zhat we had never herd zhe rime of the Queen and her bred and hvny, and did not know English well inufftu vnderstand zhe true valuef of middling' and 'scratching, wud die poem affect vs less or more paverfully zhan it dvef wizh this knoledge what wud it

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*be without the queer quality that it actually has Or
agein, if our plesor attendant on our admiration racher
zhan our admiration on our plesor? it if iisier tu ask
svch questions zhan tu answer zhem; we my be content
wich the iurer ground zhat Kipling if Kipling, and that
wichovt Kipling wei shud never hav had the pom; and we
are glad tu hav got it. Bvt this almost impties that the
writer must hav an idiosyncrasy alid tu his st§le. Hire
if anvcher example, in die very hwtijul story of The
Brushwood Boy every wvn wil remember zhat die diss
cvvery if made b§ the divice of the girl bein overherd
sini the son in Mdh flu narrates her Itfeloty drum,
it if essential tu the story that the son) shud be pathetic
and worthy. she was a musician, and had compos'd
both the music and the words. Nov won line in her
refrein (or did her criator write it for her?) if zhis:—*

We must go back with Policeman Day.

*As an apparition in the drum we did not quarrel with
Policeman Dey, for the drum if irresponsible; but in the
son he if out of place, because the son if consivs art and
responsible, and he if comic. An artist composite an
imotional sort) wud never hav allov'd the 'common
country policeman tu imperil its §diality. Lack of*

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hymor if not amon Mr. Kipling's faults; and since fa can make fvn of the policeman motif when fa chooses, fa mvst hav a callosity svmwhere on his artisticfiderf, for else fa wud never hav admitud zhe pohceman intu his son). We are dispos'd tu diink zhat fa may hav infected himself, and zhat—tu return tu ovr comparison—fa if in zhis respectjust like Wordsworth, first, in ddiberatly choosin a particular kind of direct diction, and, secondly, in pushin it too far. if we shud ixamin more closely intu zhis matter we shud be exceedin ovr limits. ' tions, andfind avrselves askinfor instance, whecher in zhe magnificent Soldier and Sailor too the quality of the swagger if wholly due tu the poetic method wich which it if so tntiely agreeable.

Mr. Kipling has written some blank verse, and in The Sacrifice of ErHeb we find him adoptin a form of it which was special§z'd som fifty years ago. Tho this mey not indicate a consider d artistic preference, it if noteworchoy that the form if simple and direct, and in so far congeenial tu him; but its constreints are artificial and monotonvns, and its rythms poor and short; in which repects it if vnlike what we miht hav ixpected of him; and we hav noticed no trace of originality in his treet ment of it, a lcho'fa can takepeins wich nvthin withovt

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in some wey distinguishin) it. He has so true a feelin for the value of words, and for the riht cadence of idiomatic speech, and so vast a vocabulary, that his example is generally useful tu a generation whosee cvlturd speeh rythms are so slovenly and vncertan. This if ispecially true of his more accentual verse, and it if on this account tu be regretted zhat ovt of his abvndance he if somtimes tempted tu overlod hislines the weiht §zher of sound or of meenin, or ofbot at woce; or this if bad example. In this respect heif tu be contrasted wich Wordsworth, for Wordsworth offendsnotorivsly b§ the other extreme, tho when hiscopiavs and thottlinneck' cloth if loosen d a finediction flowsfully, asin his description of Trinity College chapel:—

*where the statue stood
of Newton with his prism and silent face,
The marble index of a mind for ever
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.*

Mr. Kipling'sethod seemstu shot him ovt from such hihts. We doo not remember anythin) of this quality in his poems.

The Kipling Dictionary if not a concordance buta bibliografy, for whic his adm§erf wil be grateful.

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*May it bemeny yearshfore his concordance be due!
Miiuwhilehi has hi; vivisectorfs and we has put wizh
zhe dictionary aflological treetis,¹ which ixaminshis
verbal piculiaritief; zheir classif§d collection if ofgreit
interest; butwi think zhat Mr. Leeb'Lundberg'f book
illvstmtes zhe difficvlty zhat a student mvst a/lweyffpnd
in masterin zhe nuancesof a livin tvn zhat is not nativ
tu him. For instance vnder'Suffix formations in Ay the
aufhor givs threeexamplef of Mr. Kipling 'sriginality,
and zhey are zhe words unpicturesquely, monsoon
ishly, and wholeheartedly. The second of these if a
riht example of Mr. Kipling 'svrd'tnakin), bvt whole
heartedly if a common word, and unpicturesquely is
only rare becausezhe word if of no use; the connotation
of picturesque bein suchzhat its negation or privation
connotes nvfhin definit; and we remarkzhat zhe word
scowlily, which we remember meetin wizh sumwhere in
Kipling, if absent from zhis list, it my not perhaps be
wholly a coincidence zhat oftheser words zhe three on
ufhitfh Mr. Leeb'Lundberg hasgon wron wer all of
zhem in zhatt latter section of the alfabet where the
Oxford Dictionary has not yet arrivd.*

¹ *Word'fortmation in Kipling. A Stylisticphilohgical Study.* By
W. Leeb'Lundberg. (Cambridge: W. Heffer.)

XIV
WORDBOOKS

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WORD-BOOKS

IT wud seemas if in pure literature -die classics of a ded languag must hav some advantag over zthose of a livin languag. First, becauseit mvst h an advantag tu hav zhe meenin of the wordsjixt, whichisinsvme mesvr accomplishtb§ihvttify zhem out of cvrrency; and secondly, becauseeny §dealyzation of speech mvst be after where the common terms are not familiariz' b§ deily use and vvlgar§'d b§ ordinary association?. It if for zhis latter rufon zhat zh? Arabian Nights, for instance, if mvdh better reedin tu vs in an Italian translation zhan in our own English; and zhe comphter enchantment whichhildren find if greitly due tu zhe comparativ frefhnis of all languag tu zhem. Tor zhe same reeson fit zhat eny romantic tale wil appear more romantic in an anteek or forin tvn zhan in ovr everydy speech. But as ovr common speech has some associations which art if glad be rid of, zher are vzhers zhe absence ofwhich if assurelya loss. For whether or not zher be eny greiter nobility in our man conceptions when we compare avrselvelfwizh zhe ancients, yet nvne wud d?ny zhat zhe immense stores of our historic vocabulary gein

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in recognition and significance b§ bein a still living tradition in vnbroken continuity of actual growth, shades of meenin more delicat zhan cud ever be invented, intricat poetic alluson, wizh consequent command of emotion and adaptability tu zhe most svttle var§ties offeelin, glints of cylur from all cl§mes and t§mes—zhefe are qualities which giv distinction tu much of the best of our modern literature. Ther is truly no k§nd of bewty more l§able tu mishandlin), no artistic effect more vncertan and fugitiv, zhan zhatt produced bi zhes halftones, as we mey call zhem; yet tu-dey in "Europe zhey are zhe legitimat and natural welth of avr inheritance, and it wud be pedantry tu depreesiate it. And if ageinst zhis plasti' city and svttlety of livin) speech we wud balance zhe seveerer advantag which a ded languag mey be fhavht tu posess in zhe simple definition of its terms—which wud seem at first vew indispensable tu secure a bravd stiyle, we shall find zhat zher is svme delusion. Tor, havever zhe dictionaries mey define the meenin of a Greek word, we cannot avoid interpretivn it b§ ade of our modern feelins and associations. No sentiment if safe from zhe contamination of avr Shifted §deas; nor if zhe consivs excluson of eny conception or emotion the same as zhe ignorance of it. Or suppose we are contented tu hav

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*script an old term of all adventivis and Inter associa
tion, it if left a naked nondescript, which we are vnable
tu recloche in the livin nuances of emotion with which
its contemporary thavht invested it. Scientific analysis
if always zhvs intrudir tu stvltifi ovr satisfaction; and
zhe reesonin is irreproachable zhat since, zho' a man wer
tu spend his whole Iife in zhe task, it wer impossible for
him tu (kink wizh zhe same thavhts as St. Paul or Plato
thavht wizh, it if zherefor ovt of his paver tu vnderstand
a single sentence of zheir writins exactly as zhey in'
tended it.*

*We hav not, hovever, tu look far for consolation; we
can quickly reasure avrselves zhat it if just as true zhat
man if always ike same as zhat he if always thangin.
it if demonstrable, no davt, zhat absolute identity of
vnderstandin if ovt of avr reech in our interpretations of
ancient thavht; bvt for zhatt very reeson we need not
wvrry avrselves too pvnctilivsly, nor be ashamd tu admit
zhat zher if always svnzliin of the nature of delusion in
avr lov of old literature. And in fact it if truer zhat
man if always zhe same zhan zhat he if never zhe same.
The universal mysteiris force and vnfazhomably deep
instincts which constitute all zhat can properly be
termd Iife are but superficially affected b§ zhe consivs*

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d?velopments of our intellect; and it if ixactly zhose fvndamental zhins which are zhe proper svbjectmatter of all art. For in so far as human art is instinctiv (as it sums originally tu be, it if prepostervs tu svppose zhat its svbject'matter can l\$e at all amon avr purely intel lectual developments; wh\$le in so far as in cvltivated soc\$eties if it has become consivs of its eims and mefhodf, it wil still seem zhat zhe intellect if better able tu deel artistically wizh what if ovtside it zhan wizh itself; for in zhis latter case it must become self'consivs, critical, and scientific.

Admittin, zhen, not only zhat it if impossible tu exclude zhe constantant of ourrthavht from affectim avr literary art, but zhat zhis flox if in itself des\$rable and a prolific sorce of bewty, we mey also see zhat in d??lin wizh zhe unchangeable fhins zhe hihest literature, especially the best poitry, if wonderfully free from the greit obstacle zhat zhe indefnition of its mateerial wud s??m tu oppose tu it.

Nec sine te quicquam dias in luminis oras
Exoritur, neque fit laetum neque amabile quic
quam.

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*O, were it but my life
I'd throw it down for your deliverance
As frankly as a pin.*

*O world, O life, O time,
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before.*

Almost any examples are convincin. theappal is from motion tu motion; and criticifm of poitry if only wreslin with itself when it attempts analysis on a merely intdlectual basis. We shud not expect svch a method tu yeeld enyfhn more satisfactory zhan zhe analyses of zhe tmotions diemselvses, as wefind them in ps§chological trutises. Art is zhus self'conteirid and stable; and science not only dislikes art for zhis very quality of permanence, bvt has actually bun of'n led tu dini the natural supeeriority and predominance of zhe primal instincts over du intellectuial conceptios whic she if always fabricatin on the top of them.

Words are the mateerial of literary art, and words are ideasf; and what those §deasare if determin'd b§ the sense in which words hav bun usd b§ those whosee geenivs has rul'd the languag. A dictionary if a book

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which collects afhoritativ uses; and it at wonce reveels zhat every word has several uses or meenins which it needs logic tu discriminate It if a pity zhat Lamb, in his Detached Thoughts on Books, never told vs what he fhavht of Johnson; Dictionary; whezher he held it worzhy tu rank wich his bilvvd Burton and Browne, or whezher he wud hav set it between Gibbon and zhe backgammon'bord. He was himself careful of words, and knew how tenderly zhey shud be us'd; and won cud beleeve zhat he miht hav therisht a fantastic divotion tuwardf a book so full of extracts. Bvt had hi nally ever made frends wizh zhe Dictionary, hei wud hav told vs. Wizh his peculiar personal idiosyncrasy, his individual irrisponsible taste, he wud, Likely inuff, hav felt some prudish scruple at zhe §dea of gettin eny knoledg of his craft at second/hand; and he cud never hav stv mackt zhe pedantry of some of Johnson s afhorities. of Robert Browning it if recorded zhat when he determinid tu devote himself tu poitry, he red zhe whole of Johnson 's Dictionary thru, jvst as Gibbon, tu qualify himself for his greit historical task, stvdy'd zhe §tineraries of zhe Roman Empire; and zhe Doctor's twoo original folios wizh zheir vncvrteil'd quotationf are no bad reedin zhey are a magnificent feilure tu accomplish an impossible

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fat—zhatt is, tu compile a dictionary svch as a literary artist wud Iove tu posess.

Tor havever good a vocabulary a writer mey hav wun in his reedin, and havever[fluently and instinctivly he my use it, yet in a languag so rich and old as avrs he cannot contientivsly dispense wizh a dictionary; he cannot afford tu despise tke book zhat can both increese and theck his knoledg, and save him of'n from errorf which he wud wish tu avoid, In Dr. Murray's new dictionary In if nav beinprovided with a very complete book of reference; bvt while it altugezher exceeds his requ§ments, hi has tu lament zhe iconomical brevity of zhe quotations, whifli are of necessity riduced tu mire intelligible scraps, zho' in most cases zhe scraps are svfficient. it if possible zhat some dey zher mey be a purely literary dictionary com' p§l'dfrom it. B§ zhe authority of its historical riserch it promises tu doo good service in dheckin abuses. For instance, every wvn wizh a due respectfor avr literature must rigret zhe practice of zhose whoo first mistook zhi adverb 'darkling' for an adjектив. The mere novelty of zhe wrotynes gave it voge, and nov it if a favvrit epithet wizh a whole class of poets, tu whoom eny recherche ixpresionfor darknes or dimnes if invaluable. The solicism if alredy so hacknyd and uselis zhat zhe

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exposor of its history shud restore zhe word tu its original use.

A very good sort of literary dictionary is zhe New Shakespearean Dictionary,¹ b§Mr. R. J. Cunliffe, whoo in a small duble'colvmnd quarto of 340 pages has collected all the words in Shakespeare (happily in' cludin thepoems) which hav gon ovt of use or changd in meenin since his time; and zhes are so numervs zhat zhi author manteinf zhat Shakespeare's works mey be regarded as bein written in a ded languag. The hook seems trvstworthy and scientifically arrangd, and its carefully Selected quotations are svfficiently lon tu identifi a rememberd context, ifenybody thinks zhat he can doo without a dictionary, let him open this volume at hazard; he wil be amazd tu find in hav meny familiar passages he has misst zhe true miininfor lack ofzhe ixact lernin which ifhere offer'd tu him. Afew test words are svggested in zhe preface, and amon zhem if avr common adverb generally. This word in Shakespeare's idiom ment universally—zhatt if, with few or no ixceptions; it new allavs of so meny ixceptions zhat it can be us'd liven in opposition tu universally;

¹ A New Shakespearean Dictionary. By Richard John Cunliffe. (Blackie. 9s. net.)

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and the shift of meenin, sliht as it if, greitly affects the whole sense ofeny passag in which the word occvrs. it if a good example, because it if so common a word and so likely tu pass vnsvspected. Mr, Cunliffe's hook looks tu be all that it pntends tu be. it isdhiws etymology, and etymology if 'generally' divoid of literary interest; of immense scientific import, it if in literature a matter of little more zhan eimles curiosity. whencesoever a word was originally dir§v'd, its fate if almost accidentally determin'd, and mey be consider d asfixt b§ use; and dhe words ofwhich it if necessary tu know zhe origin in order tu use them ariht arejvst thosefor which an educated man needs no dictionary—at lust, if educated meens acquainted with Greek and Latin—for they are Gruk and Latin words whichi, comin tu vs thru dhe Romance literatures, hav never got out oftuch wich their origins, and are besides so rich in derivativs as tu reveel any abuse and make it ridiculvs. The value of a classical education if indisputable in this respect: the security that it givs tu writers if perhaps what prompted Dr. Gais' ford'ffamvs panegyric on University treinin, when he sed that 'it enahles one to look down with contempt upon others who have not enjoyed similar advantages'; but liven 'similar' if wron; the advantag if uneek, ther if

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nuthin simile aut secundum. The posesion of a dictionary of all zhe Greek and Latin words in ovr languag cud scarcely rank as a 'similar advantage'; yet zhatt if zhe only svbstitute zhat a writer can hope for. Possibly zher if a phi for a lesser literary dictionary exclusivly on zhes lines. The demandfor it wud increese if classical education declind, as it if tu be find it mey vnless it become more rusanable and eeconomical

Bvt even svch a dictionary as zhis wud be a hook of traditional uses razher zhan of origins; wvn mey mock at most so'ca/l'l'd originf, and ask zhem uftiat zheir own originfwer. Herbert Spencer wudpresumably hav traced a/l words tu a primitiv and accidental grvnt or squeek; andbitwun zhatt hypothetical squeek and zhe fenomenon of a thavs and different language of infinit varsity and complexity zher are no davt stages at which it if con' veenientfor a filologist tu take his stand, until Professor skeat came tu zhe rescue in 1881 wizh his dictionary wvn miht sey zhat in England zhe knoldg of etymology was confind tu specialists. His book was not actually zhe first in the feeld; both Wedgwood and Muller had pblisht etymological dictionarief of English. The former, wizh greit acutnes and indvstry, lackt, however, metodical knoledg of modern discoveries in comparativ

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flology. Muller was hitter in zhatt respect; bvt Dr. skeat's book was a wvnderful advance; and havity re joked in it for mnly thirty yeers we nov most warmly congratulate him on zhe completion of a new and fhvrvly revisd edition which if as much superior tu zhe old won as zhatt was tu its preedecessorf. only an expert cud giv eny wurzhy judgment of this nev book; bvt in zhe face of the modest acknoledgment which he mokes ofhis indetednes tu zhe New Oxford Dictionary, it if tu be remember'd zhat he himself collaborated in zhe reserdhes on which zhe conclusons in zhatt dictionary are based. This if from his new preface, where zher if also an amusin peccavi concemirh, zhe Indogermanic vowels. He tells vs zhat in zhe d̄ys when he first workt he was allovd zhe use of only three of the five theef vowels; e and o had been done away wizh. it seems zhat certan eevil'disposfd Germanf 'of that period, notably curtius, Fick, Schleicher, and Yanicek!, had consp̄rd ageinst zhem and thavht tu annihilate them; and zheir machinations had resulted in zhe discvymfitur and disappearance of dhe twoo vowels. But on zhe

¹ *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language.* By Rev. Walter W. Skeat. New Edition. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. London: Frowde. 38s. net.)

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deceese or disbandin of zhone brigands, when zhe land became quiet, zhen e and o agein reisd zheit heds and retrvnd tu zheir nativ haunts; and b§ zhe dhampionship of a new race of warriors, kluge Franck, Falk, and Torp, are navfirmly reestablisht. Won whoo never misstzhtese vowels from zhe fast edition mey be comforud b§ zhe assurance of zheir presence in the new book, and rigret zhat Professor skeat shud hav been so vnneassnrily put abavt. The nvmber of new words and corrections if incredible, and zhe laborivs revision of his own work after thirty yeers criticicm and attention if a feet zhe like of which few avthorshav accomplisht. Tho' not a literary dictionary, it abovnds in literary information, and its moderat size wil iniure it a place in every library.

XV

A LETTER TO A MUSICIAN ON ENGLISH PROSODY

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XV

A LETTER TO A MUSICIAN ON ENGLISH PROSODY

M§ dear —, *uftien lately yoo askt me tu recommend yoo a hook on English prosody, and I sed zhat I was vnable tu doo so, I had some scruples of consience, because, as a matter offact, I hav never myself red eny of the trutises, tho I hav Icokt intu meny of diem, and from thatt, and from zhe report of students and reviewers, I think zhat I know pretty well the natyir of zheir contents; so zhat yoor forzher inqu^rief cvme tu mi a; n diallinge tu ex' plein myself which if I cud not doo, I shud be. in a con' temptible position. I embrace zhe opportunity zhe more willingly because yoo are a musician, if m§ notions are resonable yoo wil understand them; if yoo doo not, yoo mey conclude zhat diey are not wurzhy of yoor attention.*

PRELIMINARY

If imposibble, havever wun m§ht desire it, tu set out wizh satisfactory definition; of Prosody and Poetic rythm, for zhe latter term ispednllly if difficvlt tufix: and it wil be best tu ixamin perfectid poetry and su vShat it if zhat we hav tu did wizh.

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*poet rythm. if we take verses b§ Virgil, Dante or Milton, whoo wer
all of Asmartistic geerivses wefind that their elaborat
rythms are a compound, arrivd at bi a conflict between
twoo separat factorf, which we my call zhe speech-
rythm and die Metric rythm. Take an example from
Virgil,*

Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros.

*I hav no dovt that I injoy this ryfhm as Virgil intended
it, for I mi it in mesord lons and shorts, and Ifind that
the speech'accent on antiquos, contradictin the metrical
ictvs, enhance the bewty, andjoins on smoothly tu the
lon level subterlabentia, wich its twoo little glidin
syllables at the end in quiet motion ageinst the solid
muros. Ther is no room for difference of opinion; and
the same fmominon mats vs everyufhere. The poetic
ryfhm dirives its bewtyfrom the conflict between a (pro
sodial) meetre, which makes vs more or less iexpect a
certan regular ryfhm of accent cornspondity with the
typical metric strvctur, and, on the vcher hand, a speech
rythm which givs it all manner of variity b§ over'
ridin it in the above instance, tho the essence of the
meetre is the seequence oflonand short syllables; we yet
regard the hexameter as a typically fallin ryfhm, i.e.*

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wizh its man accents on zhe initial syllabkf of zhe con'stityientfet, which wudgiv antiquos; and zhe bewty of Virgil's line conteins the contradiction or dislocation of zthose accents.

Moreover, if we wer vnacqueinted wizh hexameter verse (i.e. wizh zhe prosody), zfie line quoted wud seem a lyne of pros e, in prose'ryfham, and it wud be in itself no less bewtiful zhan it is. only zhe knoledg zhat it if an hexameter adds tu our satisfaction; zhe definition of zhe value of zhe syllables and zhe recognition of zhe verse' form giv vs plefvr, and especially becavse it if won of meny vaneties of a most skilfully invented form, which b§ zheir accumulation make pleesin poems. But zhis re'flection me also convince vs of zhe svbjectiv natur of zhe quality of poetic ryfham, and consequently haw it mvst defy exavstiv analysis, alzho it me allow of zhe analytical separation of its components.

And since we can imagin zhat zhe hexameter had never been invented, and yet zhat zheses words miht still hav been written, it wil follow zhat poetic rythm mey be regarded as common speech/ryfham svbjected tu certan definitions and limitations: and zhe lavs of zheses wil no davt be zhe prosody.

Let vs for zhe moment svppose zhat zher if no svdi

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thin a f' prosody, and inquire intu the elements or factors of speech'ryfhm.

THE VOCAL FACTORS OF SPEECH'RYT HM

Novif *yoo reed English verse aloud, yoor man in devvr if tu txpress the rythrn. Yoo know whatyoo meen b§ this, and yoo are aware whecher yoo are svccessful or not.*

Thmfsctorf. Svppofity that yco express the rythtn as yoo wish, yoo wil find that yoo hav freely usd the only thru meens which are at yoor dispofal. First, yoo wil hav distinguisht some syllables b§ their comparativ length and brevity. Secondly, yoo wil hav very'd the pitdh of yoor voice. Thirdly, yoo wil hav very'd the strenlt of yoor voice, enforcin some syllables with greiter lavdnes; and yoo wil hav freely combind date different components of (Paw.) rythm. Ther if nothin else that yoo can doo tuwards ixpressin the rythm, ixcept that {and especially in elaboratly written verse) yoo wil hav relid agrat dul on paveses or silenas ofsutble duration, These paveses are essential tu good reedin, bvt they are not essential tu avr present consideration. First zher are the metric paveses, which merely isolate balancinn sections of verse rythm. Then ther are the grammatical paveses or

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stops: zhe se are interrrptions of zhe metric ryfhm, which are izher condond for zhe sake of zhe sense, or are ob' serv'd tu indicate and sepnrat the evervaryir[^] sections of zhe speech'ryfhm (bein zhvs tu speech'ryfhm what metric paves are tu zhe meetre. NOV zhe grammatical pav;e is a fysical necessity, a; the brethplace, and it mvst of corse be a tryie 'rest' of actual time'value. Bvt its time'value in poitry is indefinit, and it ha; zherefor no rythmical significance txcept a; zhe siyn of zhe breik in the grammar, if these paves bell a excliyidid, yoo wil findsofiw true intrarythmical paves left, i.e. time rests wizhin a section of rythm and essential tu its ix presion, zhat we mey consider diem a; bthtyin) tu a more advanced treetment of zhe svbjict, and confine ovrsele; tu zh? activ var§itie; of vocal tfect, namely, QUAN' TITY, PITCH, and LOUDNESS.¹

¹ LOUDNESS. I use *zhis word and not 'stress'*, becavs, zho some apriorities still mantein zhat stress is only loudnes, I meed zhe word stress tu indicate a condition uflidi is mvdh more ilaborat, and induced very varivsly. (a) I /hud admit zhat loudnis meyw stress, bvt (b) I hold zhat it if more fruquently and more iffectually given b§ tonal accent, in which case it is (for avr porpos) inclyided vnder pitch. (c) It is also svmtimes determind b§ *Quantity*, and (d) svmtimes b§ *Position*; as in zhe last place of avr decasyllabic verses where zhatt lacks true accentual stress. When zherefor I confine m§, third voiceeffect tu loudnis, andpretend that m§classification

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All sufficience of these three yoo wil find on examination that the of quantity first, thatt if difference of quantity, is the only won which wil giv ryfhm widiovt the tide of ither of the vthers. It if well tu make this quite deer, and musical examples are the simplest.

Let vs, tu begin with, take nn example ushere all three are present, the slow moovement of an orchestral symfony. when this if perform d bi die orchestra we hear different t[me]valw of die notes, zheir differences of pitch, and actual enforcements of lovdnes, and all of these seem tu he essential tu the rythmic effect.

Exclusion of Bvt nov if we take the same Andante and perjorm it lavdnes on the quireorgan, the conditions of which preclude the difference of lovd and soft, we find diat did die effect if generally poorer than in die orchestral performance, yet die ryfhm if maffected. we hav here dien an

if ixavstiv, I lave a smvllfiav in m[demonstration: bvt yet wil perceeve we that it foes not nuitumllly invalidate the argument, because position is; the only condition which iscapes; and thatt plainly belons tu a much more ilabornt scale of treement, wherin mattes wud be annlsdand the effcts of zhe combinations of the different factors wud also be shown. For instance, a concurrence of length, hih pitch, lavdnes, and position givs an overhelmin stress, and allpossible combinations among wil for of tiitm my occor, and the first three of zhem are wil very varinble in dignr. It is no wynder that it if difficvlt tu difine stress.

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*example of an elaborat ryflim expresst wizhovt vam
tions of luvdnes.*

*Now tu exclude vitdh. The commomst example zhat of lavdnes
I can think of if zhe monotonia of the preyers in andpiti.
cafheederal service. Hire vaqetief of pitdh are of corse
absent, bvt yoo mey generally detect zhe quantities tu hi
complicated b§ some variation of lavdnes. In proportion,
havever, as monotonin if well dune the sound if level in
force, verhaps yoo wil ask, vkere if zhe rythm? I was
wvnce induced tu establish a quire in a contry thurch, and
amon m§ first tasks I had tu trein zhe boys in choral
monotone. They wernaturally widiavtenynotion of edu
cated speecd'rythms. But zher if no difficulty in teechin
boys enyfhity zhatycocorself understand; zhey can imitate
enythity, and bve tu doo it. I had zherefor only tu offer
die correct rythmftu zheir iarf, and zhey adopted zhem at
wonce. when we had got die vowels and consonants riht,
both tu spare m§ own voice, and also because I prefer'd a
model ufhidi cud not suggest stress tu zhem, I made the
organ set zhe rythms, and pullin) out thegreit diapason I
but on it the syllables of zhe Lord's Vryerfor die boys tu
pick up. This waf of corse nuM[^] but boo, boo, boo, only
zhe boof wer of different durationf: yet dhe ryfhm was so
distinct, it was so evident zhat zhe organ was seyin the*

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Lord'f preyer, that I was at fast rather shockt, and it seemd that I was dovin svmthin profane; for it was comic tu ike boys as well af tu me bvt the absvrdity soon wore off. Now here was ryihm without lavdnes orpitdh.

ifyoo shud still ask what I meen b§ seyin that this was ry(hm, yoo mid tu ixtend yoor notion of speec rythm tu include every recognizable motion ofspudi in t\me. The Lord'f Vryer if not in poetic rythm, bvt if it had ban, then zhi organ wud hav ixpresst it uven more plainly, and zher if no tyne tu h drawn in spudh'ryfhmf htwiin zhofe zhat are proper verserythms and zthose that are only possible in prose: zher if really no good speeth'ryfhm which miht not be transfer d from prose intu a poetry zhat had a svficiently ilabomtid prosody, with thisproviso only, zhat it mvst be a short member; for good prof e constrvcts and combinef its ryfhm so zhat in their ixtension they doo not make or svggest verse.

Since we see, then, that ryfhm mey be ixpresst b§ quantity alone, wi hav tu ixamine Whether§zher pitch or loudness are sufficient in themselves tu giv ryfium.

Vhtfh alone. Let vs fast take vitdh. A common hym'tyne of eenqual notes wud seem tu be the most promisin example, and tu fulfil the condition}, bvt it d\es not. it if a melody, and thatt implies ryfhm, bvt in so far af it has

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rythm it if dependent on its metre, which ixists only b§ virtue of cortanpaves or rests which its svbdivision intu short sections iitermins. Nov, qiven these sections, they discover initial and other stresses which are enforced b§ the words or the meetre or the harmony, or b§avll (km, and without these ades and interprnationf die strvctw if ariflimic, ani it can k rei in meny afferent weyf.

It nmeinf only tu consiier Lavints, which my here be Lawdnes done. iiscqVi as accent without pitch or quantity. Nov ifwe take a svccesion of perfectly eequal notes, iifferim only in diat svme of diem {eny diat yco my dhcofe) are lavier dian the others, the ixperiment wil suggest only die simple skehtonf of die most monotonvs ryflimf, ani if wvn of these delure itself, such as a svccesion of threes or fors, yoo wil probably be vnconsivsly led tu reinforce it with some device of quantitiv frasin. Tu compare such a result with the ixperiment ofbeetin the Lori'f Vryer on the orgnn if tu compare sumthin too elimentary tu be of eny value wich symfhiin that if too complex and ixtensiv tu define.

THE OFFICE OF PROSODY

M§ examples wil hav sufficiently ilbstratii m§ man' in; yoor conviction wil depend on yoor own consiieration

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of the matter, on die svppofition zhatyooagreewi can make an important step, andsy that, lookin aszhe ques' tionfrom zhe point ofviw of spwHuryflim, it wud sum zhat it if zhe addition ofyrosody tu spiiilh'ryflim which dtterminf it tu bt poetic ryfhm or verse, what, zhen, paxdy exactly is Prosody? Our English word if not carry A over from the Greek word, with its vncertan and varius meenin, bvt it mvst hav come with zhe Yrendk word thru zhe scolastic Latin; and like zhe French term it ofsellable?, primarily denotes the rulesfor zhe tmtment of syllablef in verse, whezher zhey are tu be consider'd as lon or Jhort, accented or vnaccenud, tlidible or not, Φc., Φc. The syllablef, Mdh are the units of rythmic spufh, are b\ myir of so indefinit a quality and capable ofsuch different vocal ixpresion, zhat apart from zhe desire which every artist mvst fid tu hav his work consistent in itself, his appeal tu an audience wud convince him that zher if no chance of his ilaborat ryfms bein rihtly in' terpreted vnless hif tmtment of syllablef if vnderstood. Rjilef mvst zherefor nrfce and be agreed vpon for zlie tmtment of syllablef, and zhis if zhe first indispensable of fut, office of Prosody. Then, the syllables bein fixt, their commonest combination (which are practically com' rnensymt wizh word'-units) are defin'd and namd; and

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these are calld feet. And after this the third step of Prosody is tu prescriȝbe meetres, thatt is tu register the ofmeetre man systems of feet which peets hav invented tu make verses and stanzas. Thys the Alcaic stanza if—

—○—	—○○—○○	bis	} A. B. bis A. C. B. C.
—○—	—○—		
—○○—○○	—○—		

and in tahylutity meetres prosody if at wonce invold in rythm, for we my ssy generally that every mutre has Rythm a typical accentual ryftim of its own—which was pre of meetre sumably the motiv of its invention—tho it may be in some cases difficvl tufix on won tu the exluson of all others certanly (tu take iisy examples) we may regard the hexameter as a typically fallin ryfham, and the iambic as a risin ryfham. The force of this prosodial rythm wil vary in different meetres, and with different reeders. but won thin stands out very prominently, be namely, that in the essential shme of the Greek meetre bas'd on which I hav tabulated above it if the quantities only that different are prescrib'd and fixt, while the accents stresses are not factors priscrid, so that eny speech'ryfham while had a correspondin sequence of those quantities wudfit the skeme;¹

I Notalweys muking good verse; bvt the deetals of thatt are omitted as not affectin the argument: theirvnqtie; of'n cancel eech other.

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whzras, if die matte had been an accentual skeme, thatis if, if die syllabic sins had bun inueterminat wiche respect tu quantity (insted of bein lons and shorts), bvt mark with prescrib'd accents in certan places, then the quantities wud hav been free, and zny speech'ryflim with a correspondin seequence of accents wud hav fitted die form, independently of die lenth or shortnes of any won particular accented or vnaccented syllable. Ther cud divs be twoo quite distinct systmf of prosody, accordin as the meetres wer rul'd b§ won or other ofthese different factor} of speech'rythm.

THREE KINDS OF PROSODY

Now the *history of European verse shows us three distinct systmf ofvrosody, Mdh can be numd:—*

1. *The Quantitiv system.*
2. *The Syllabic system.*
5. *The Stress system.*

I wilgiv a short account ofeech ofthese.

1. The system of die Greeks was scientifically founded The quart'on quantity, because they knew zhatt tu be the only won titiv syttm.of the three distinction} of spoken syllables which wil giv rythm b§ itself. Bvt die speech'quantitief of their syllables bein as indeterminut as otrs are, the Greeks

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devisd a convention b§ which zheir syllables wer separated intu twoo classes, wvn offty syllabkf, zhe vdier of ihort, zhe lon beity twice the. duration of the short, as a minim tu a crochet; and this artificial distinction of zhe syllables was the foundation of their prosody. The convention was absolutely enforced, eeven in their profe oratory, and zheir verse cannot be vnderstcod vnless it if strictly obfervd. For zhe result which they obteind was zhiz: die quantities gave such markt and definit ryfhms, zhat zhefe held zheir own in spite of the varivs speech' accents which overbid them. The Latins copyin their method arrivd at a like result.

2. *The syllabic systim, which has preveil'd in varivs The syllabic developments thruavt Europ from the decy of the Greek system. systim vp tu dieprefent time, had no more scientific basis than the imitation of the Latin poitry b§ writers whoo did not understand it. Bvt I beleeve zhat in svdh matters the final cavse if the efficient cavse, and zhat it was zherefor the possibility of the results which we hav wit nesst zhat led them on zheir pathles experiments. Criticism discovers twoo weeknesses in the system: won, the absence ofeny definit prosodial principle, the other, which followffrom zhe first, the tendency for different and incompatible principles tu assert zhemselfes, indiscriminatly*

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*overran) eefh other's afhoryt, vntil zhe house if so
divyded ageinst itself that itfalls intu anarchy.*

*I wil Shortly illustrate won or twoo points. First, m§
statement zhat zhis syllabic system arose from writin
quantitiv verse wizhavt zhe quantities The octosyllabic
church'hyms giv a good example, and for all zhat I
know zhey mey hav actually ban zhe first step, The
erlust of zhese hyms wer composd in correct §ambic
matte, e.g. (forzh cent.):—*

Splendor paterna gloriae
De luce lucem proferens
Lux lucis et fons luminis
Dies dierum illuminans.

*Compare wizh zhis what writers wrote whoo did not
know zhe classic rules, e.g.:—*

1. Ad coenam Agni prouidi
Et stolis albis candidi
Post transitum maris rubri
christo canamus principi.
2. Ne grauis somnus irruat
Nee hostis nos surripiat
Nee caro illi consentiens
Nos tibi reos statuat.

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Sudh stanza; virtually contein zhe whole of Euw pian syllabic Prosody; 'zho' as a matter offact zhe ryile of ilifon, ufhidh zlitfe writer? of'n neglected, was pre ftrvd. since zhefe hyms wer intended tu be svn tu tune; zhat wer generally of aqual notes wizh tendency tu wlitzmat accent, zhe quantities did not signifi and zher was a tendency to alternate stress, which came tu be zhe norm and bane of syllabic verse;² and zhis leeds tu another svmwhat cnrivs observation, namely, zhat zhesse writer? of nonquantitiv gambles wer wizhheld from die natural tendency tu write merely in alternat stress tu sut zheir tune; (see ex. 2, page 68) b§ zheir familiarity wizh zhe free ryfltm; of zh? older wellAvvd hymf;³ and since zthose broken ryflms had bun originally occa'

¹ M§ necessary brevity confines me tu consideration of the disyllabic meetref; bvt zhis if jvstifyd b§ zheir overrulin historical importance, and their ouerufulmin preponderance in European syllabic verse.

² In zhe absence of a filosofic grammar of rythm won can only offer opinion; as gesses, but it wud sum tu mi zhat alternat stress can only be of rythmic value in poetry as the firmest basis for the free-est elaboration. Won's memory hardly reeches back tu the time when it cud satisfy wvn. The force of it always remeins as won of zhe most powerful resorces of effect, bvt its vnreleevd monotony is tu an educated ear more likely tu madden zhan tu lull [See Remark, No. X I I , p. 84.]

³ And 'Turcos oppressi et barbaras gentes excussi* if in zhis category.

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*fond b§the vnalterable overnlin feeturs of zhe lan
Sung, zhey wer almost as difficult tu avoid as zhey wer
eesy tu imitate, it if putty artan zhat zhefreequency of
inversion of the first foot in all English syllabic §ambic)
verse if an vnbroken tradition from zhe Latin; zhe con'
vnnience of ollovity a disyllable at zhe hginnin^ of zhe
line bein convey'd and incvrgd b§precedent*

*The 'prosody' of European syllabic verse may be
rvffly set ovt as follows:—*

- (i) *Ther mvst be so meny syllablef in zhe verse.*
- (2) *Any extra syllablef mvst be accounted for b§
ilison.*
- (5) *Any syllable may be lon or short.*
- (4) *Ther if a tendency tu a/lternat stress.*

*This if honistly -Axe wretched skehton¹ (indeed, in
Milton 's perfected 'pambics' we my add zhat eny syllable
my be accented or vnaccented), and no amount of d?<>
velopment can ribild its hybrid constrvction.² Eor avr*

¹ *Tr§ ztii experiment of svplptt) lacunae. Suppose for syllables tu be
missityfrotn zhe middles respectivly of a Greek iambic, a "Latin hexameter,
and an English blank verse. In zhe twoo former cases zhe prosodial limitiⁱⁱ
tions exclude meny durable wurds; in die syllabic shme almost eny
wvrds wilfit.*

² *I wud not wish tu sum tu vnderestimnt zlie extreme biwty tu which
verse has atteind vnder the syllabic system. Shakespeare and Milton hav*

ON ENGLISH PROSODY

present consideration of die rule} of Prosody die hare skeleton wil serve; hvt tu die description we mey add that die history of its development Jhowf diat it determinid its metrical form} manly b§ qme, and that 'stress', dier beity nvihin) of eequal force tu oppose it, gradually pre^ dominated, invadirk and practically rulin syllabic verse Ion, before it was openly recognizd, or eny hint was given offormulatir^ its principlef, or construct^ a pro sody of it, the principles ofwhich are irreconcilable wich die syllabic system, and which I wil nov describe.

3. stress/prosody, in diis system die natural ac The stress centual speedh'ryflimf cvme tu die frvnt, and are die system. determine factor of die verse, overruling die syllabic determination. These speedh'ryfhamf wer always pre sent; they constituted in die classical verse die man passages of blank verse as fine as poetry can be. I wud make three remarks here. (1) A free and simple basis (syfli as zhe syllabic systim has) probably offers die best opportunity for elaboration. (2) It is probable diat no verse has ever been subject tu svdh varivs elaboration as zht European syllabic verse; die question is rather vkedier enyfvdier development on die same lyies if possible. (f) On die simplest syllabic skeme it is impossible in English tu write twoo verses exactly alike and equivalent, becavse of die infinit variety of die syllabic unit and its combinations: and diese natural andsvtle differencef of value, did common tu all systems of prosody, are perhaps of greiter rythmical effect in die syllabic dian in die quantitiv system.

LETTER TO A MUSICIAN

variety of effects within zhe different mtttres, bvt zhey wer counterpointed, so tu spnk, on a quanttiv ryfhm, zhatt is', on a framework of strict (vnaccented) time, which not only imposd necessary limitations bvt, certanly in Latin, tu n greit ixtent ditermind dieir forms. In zhe syllabic Prosody, in uflifli dteprosodial rules wer so mucfh nlaxt, zhtfe spiidh'ryfhms came in zhe best writers tu h of first importance, and in Milton {for example) wi can sn zhat zhey are only wizhheld from absolute a/fhoriy and liberty b§ observance of a conservativ syllabic fiction, which if sofeeturles zhat it needs tu be expleind whi Milton shud hav thavht it of eny value. Tor all Milton s freespeech rythms, ufhidh are zhe characteristic hwty of his verse, and b§zheir boldms moke his originality af a ryfhmist, are confynd b% a strict syllabic limitation, viz. zhat zhe syllables ufhidh compose diem mvst still hip die first tweo rules of zhe syllabic Vrosody, and be resoluble intu so meny jamb'. Bvt zh?se so'call'd §amb's are zhemelves nav digradid tu nvzhin), for die disyllabic unit ufhidi still preserves zhatt old name has no definition: it has lost its quantities, nor are its lost quantities always indicated b§ accent or stress; its disyllabic quality, too, is resoluble b§ zht old lav of Latin difon (ufhidi Milton ixtendid tu liquids,

ON ENGLISH PROSODY

ridwn) chaucer'f practice tu artanfixt rule/) intu tri' syllabic form; so zhat either or both of zhe syllable? ofzhefictiv %amb my be lon> or Short, accented or vn' accented, uftife zhe whole my h a trisyllabic foot of meny vaqetief. Yet in hi; carefully compofd later poitry Milton kept strictly tu zhe syllabic rulef, and never allovd himself eny rythm uſliidh cud not be prosodially interpreted in zhis fctitivs faſliion—counted on die finger?. Nov zhe stress'systim merely casts off zhis fiction of Milton 's, and it dismiss?; it zhe more redily becavse no won except won or twoo scolars has ever understood it

stress kit^ admitted tu rule, it follows zhat zhe stress' rythms are, vp tu a certan point, identical wizh modern mufic, uſlierin every bar if an accent follow'd b§ its complement: and zheris no ryfhm of modern mufic Mdh is not a/lso a possible and proper ry(hm of stressor0' sody; and die recognition of pure stress'prosody waf no davt manly influenced b§ die svcesseſ of contemporary mufic. Bvt poetry if not bound, af our mufic if, tu hav eequal barf; so zhat its rythmicfeeld if indefinitely w\$der. Tu understand die speedh'ryfhmf of poetry a mufician mvst realize from vShat an enormvsfeeld of ryfhm he if excluded b% hif rule of eequal barf. Muficianf, havever.

LETTER TO A MUSICIAN

*dco not navadtyf n??d tu b? inform d of this; for, havity
zxicytid all zhe motions zhat their dheins allav'd dhem,
They are alredy htginnity tu ngret zheir bond?, and tax
zlieir ing?nyiity tu escape from zhem, a? zhefmquentsyncopation?
anddchange offyme'signatyire in zheir music testify*

*what rules zhis new stressorosody wil set tu gvvern
its ryfhmf won cannot foresee, and titer is as yet no recog'
nizd prosody of stress'verse. I hav experimened wich
it, and trid tu determin what those rules mvst be; and
zher is little davt zhat zhe perfected Prosody wil pey
greit attention tu zhe quantitiv value of syllables, zho
not on zhe classical system, Here, havever, I wish only*

*Indifference tu quantity if the strungest fenomeon in English verse.
Our languag conteins syllables as lon as syllables can be, and others as
Short as syllables can be, and yet the twoo extremes are very commonly
treeted as ryfhmically iquivalent. A sort of rythmical patter ofstrress is set
up, and MISPRONUNCIATION is RELIED ON tu overcame my favlse
quantities'. This was taught me at school, e.g. die Greek word
was pronounced glewkeus, as a spondu of die hiv'ust class accintid strongly
on the first syllable, and then had tu be red in such a verse as this (cow
spondin tu the tia of the line quotedfrom Virgil)—*

τοῦτ' ἄρα δεύτατον εἶπεν ἔπος, στε οἱ γλυκύς ὕπνος.

*It is rinlly difficult tu get an averag classical scolar, whoo has bun zdyicuud
as I was, tu su dxat dxer is zny absurdity hire. On the vdier hand, an averag
zdyicatid lady wil not beleeve that the scolars can begilty of an absurdity so
manifzst. (See Rimark V,pp. 79-80.)*

ON ENGLISH PROSODY

tu differentiate diatt sysUm from zht vdierf, and tdiat I hav sedfnowf zhis conchfon:

SUMMARY

- i. In zhe Griik sysUm zhe Prosody if quantitiv.*
- 2. in die syllabic sysUm it if 'syllabic' (a; describd).*
- 3. In the stress'systim it if accentual.*

And whilein zhe classical Prosody zhe quantitief wer zhe man prosodial basis, first order'd and kid davn, wizh die spudh'ryftwif couvnterpointid vpon it, in die stress sysUm, on dit vzher hand, it if zhe spiiih'ryfhamf which are die basis, and zheir quantitiv syllablef wil h so order d af tu enforce diem, and zheir vaqtief wil h practically similar tu die vaqtief of modern myific wizh its minimf, croflitts, quaverf, dotud note:, , .

ihife (hityf hity so, it wud sum tu mi indispensable <con diat eny trntis on Prosody /hud recognize ditfe fhm cluson different systnuf: indud, a Prosody Mdh dvef not recognize diem if tu mi vnintelligible. Btfore mi few final rmark yco wil ixpect mi tu sty svmihin) about rime.*

RIME

Rules for qme are strictly a part of Prosody widiin m[definition of zhe term, bvt diey wllfor no discvson

IS

SUMMARY

here, it if, havever, well tu understand zhe relation in
ufhidh r^me scientificaly stand? tu poetry. The man
fbin> in poetry mvst he zhe \$deaf vShiih zhe wvrdcf carry;
its most important factor; are zhe eesfhetic and inteU
lectyialform, and zhe quality of zhe diction in ufhidh zhe
ideas are convey d: wizh nvne of zhe;e (hityf are we
concern d, bvt supposi^ zhefe at zheir best, wizh zhe
ryfhmf syitable and zhe Prosody also syfficient, zhe poet
wil still f^nd zhat hi; mateerial if of^n insvrmavtably
refractory in zhe matter of syllabic eufony. Hi; with if
zhat zhe soundf shud alweyf be bewtiful or agreeable, and
zhis if impossible, for languag waf not invented wizh zhish
eim, and it almost vlwtyf falls Short of what if de^
sirable (zhe history of English accidence if a disgrace tu
zhe eesfhetic facvlief of zhe nation); zher if, in fact, a
constant irremediable deficiency in zhish merely fonetic
bewty, and it if reefonable zhat extranevs artifices /hud
hav been dev^fd tu svppl^ it. Alliteration, assonance,
and r[me are &ll contqvancef of zhish sort; zhey are in
zheir natyir bewtificationf of zhe languag independent of
zhe \$deaf, and of zhe ryfhm, and of zhe diction, and in'
tended tu svpplfr b[zheir artificial correspondencef zhe
want of natural bewty in zhe garment of languag. Bvt it
mvst not be overlcokt zhat zhey wtr a/so well n\$h

SUMMARY

necessitated b§ zhe vnsqentific caracter of die syllabic Prosody, which havity in ignorance discarded ike scientific Prosody of die poetry ushifli it imitated, had tu devie new rydeffor itself experimentally as it grew vp, and eegerly seezd on svdh external artificef of speedh tu dress out its waverityformfjvst a? an architects Mdh ha} lost its livin tradition? off Reform wil seek tuface itself witk superficial ornament Alliteration in erly English Poetry waf a man feetyir of strvctur. It haf periM a} a metrical skeme, bvt it if freely yifd in all pottry, and it if so natural tu languag zhat itfyndf a place in zhe commonest af well af in zhe most elaborated speedh of all k[ndf. Rime has had a loty rein, and still flvrifhif, and it if in English wvn of zhe dheef metrical factorf. Like a lowborn vpstart it has uven savht tu establish its kinJhip wizh zhe ancient family ofry(hm bi incorporating zh? aristocratic h and y intu its name. Af it distinguifhef verstf zhat hav no vzher distinction, its disposition dHerminf stanzajormf, &c; and for zhis rufon it yifvrps a prominence for Mdh it if Minted. Dryden, indeed, and vriierf hav ridicyiYd ike notion of vnr%omd^l verse in English; and zheir opinion if a feir consequence on ike poverty of zheir Prosody. Milton f later poimf wer an attempt so tu strenftien English

SUMMARY

*Vrosody aftu render it independent of r\me. in m%
opinion he sav exactly vShat waf needed, and ii wud hav
been strange if he had not seen. R\$me if so trammellif^,
its effects so cloyiq, and its wvrzhiest resorcef are so
quickly exavsted,¹ and of'n of svfli conspicyiws artif
tiality, diat a Vrosody Mdi waf good envjf tu doo
widiovit it wud immeidatly discard it, in sp^te of its
almost vnparalleVd adheevments.*

REMARKS.

I. *if zhefe three systemf are tu he treeted of together af
wvn system, it if necessary tufpnd a common'rnefvr of
diem, and die science ofryfhm if atprefent imdequat tu
die task.*

II. *The confnfin) of diem if so universal af tu hav
acqupd a sort of a>fhority; and die confyifon haf dis'
credited die whole svbject.*

III. *The man sorce of error if die wror^ wey in Mfli
classical scolarfreed classical verse, and die teedhir^ of
dieir misinterpretation in our scoolf. classical poetry
heity on a quantitiv system ofloqf and fhorts, it mvst be
red, not af we reed ovr syllabic verse, bvt in lon>f and*

¹ Ifyco obstrve die qmes tu YLnfcft in Spenser'? Faery Queen, yco wil
ftnd die pom considerably famngd thereby

SUMMARY

Jhorts af it waf compofd, and if it if not so nd it if misunderstood, if it if red in lons and shorts, dien zhe quantitiv ryfhamf appnr, and die spiidh'accents giv no difficvly.

IV. *Tu giv tvvn a/l'l'convincity example of ufhat classical scolnrf actually dco, b§ trinity -die different systimf as iquivalent, -die hexamiter wil serve. This, af Professor Mackail wvnce compkind tu mi, if red bh them af AN ACCENTUAL RHYTHM IN THE TRIPLE TIME OF MODERN MUSIC, diatt if, made vp of tribrachs and trochiif all stress'd on dhe first syllable. It if of corse patent diat if die hexamiter wer in a tine of modern music it wud bi a duple and not a triple t^me; bvt it haf absolutely nvfhity in common wizh zhe stress'ryfhamf of modern mufic.*

V. *A difficvly if naturally felt in dii vnl^kelihood diat svdh a consensus oflernid opinion, from die confix dent mvlisc[ence of Goethe tu dii nqually confident fastidivsnis of Matthew Arnold, Jhud bi open tu svdh a monstrvs riprodi of ehmentary incompitence. Bvt dii explanation if not difficult, if die whole blunder if per> cnvd af die misreprifentation of quantity b§accent. English puple al ihink diat an accent {or stress) makes a syllable loty, ufheraf meny of our wurdfare accentidaf*

SUMMARY

independently ofzheir quantitie; a; zhe Greek wvrd; wer, e.g. magistrate, prolific: and &ll our pyrrhic wvrd; (= u u) fyke habit, very, silly, solid, scurry, are accented, tyke zhe Latin, on die first syllable, and svme very strongly, and zhis of corse absolutely explode; zhe vvlgar notion zhat accented syllable; can be reckon d a/lwey; a; lon;beside;, yoo my see zhat zhis accent in some cases actually shortens the syllable/prr/zer, a; in zhe wvrd battle; for in zhe older form battail, in uflidiidh die first syllable had not zhis decided accent, yco wil not pronounce it so Jhort, bvt immeidiatly zhat yco strenftienits accent,a;in ovr battle (= bat'l) zhe t clo;e; vp zhe a myfli more quickly and perceptibly Shorten; it.

VI. Tu evil Milton; blank verse ^ambic, a; he himself ca/U'd it, i; ree;onable envff, and in die absence of a modern terminology¹ it serve; well tu distinguish it from zhe hexametric epic verse, and it describe; its du syllabic basis, and suggests its r&iq ryfhm (ufhidi my r^htly be consider d a; zhe typical gamble stress, svfli a; we see in Catullus'; carefully accentual verse, 'vhasellus ille quern uidetis hospites', &c.); moreover, ovr disyllabic verse i; zhe direct descendant of and substitute for die

¹ *Thi absence of terminology is Evidence ojhi vnscpntific carncter of zhe systim, as I hau dtscqb'd it.*

SUMMARY

classic iambic. But a scientific twitis on Vrosody cannot afford to use analogical terms.

VII. I hold confidently guess "hat ihefyvcfcot mntref of our blank verse, &c, came from the Sapphic line. This was a/lywyff familiar and was very early ridyiced b[myifical settir^f to an accentual rhyme, Mdh still obteinf in common settityf of decasyllabic (%ambic Ipne in dhvrdh hymf, and occvrf frequently in a/l all ovr blank verse. I open Wordsworth at hazard in The Borderers and find—

*Here at my breast and ask me where I bought it
I love her though I dare not call her daughter,
oh the poor tenant of that ragged homestead,
justice had been most cruelly defrauded.*

*Thatfe lief wud &ll h qu'^te cvmfortable in ike
notorbs Needy Knife-grinder, which was a skit on
the accentual Sapphic, zho' it is of'n token seeriy.*

VIII. I quote Ms from The Times, April 10, 1903.
*An English scholar, confronted with the following
lines—*

*Δαίμων στυγνὸς ἐπλανᾶτο νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμῶν
κοιμωμένων
πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν ἔχλεύαζε κάρριπτε σπόρους
θανάτον*

SUMMARY

will probably need to look at them twice before he realizes that they are hexameters. Yet they scan on exactly the same principle as . . . Goethe's hexamiterf. Thy are not more barbarvs, not a uftiit; and scohr? rud Virgil muchaszhife lie? wer written; dier if little difference.

IX. *The Professor of Latin at wvn of ourXJniver^ sitieswvnce told methat of all hispnplf theton men had b^far die best sense of quantity, THEY HAVE NO SENSE OF QUANTITY AT ALL. THEY HAVE ONLY A KNOWLEDGE OF QUANTITIES, hammer d intu diem b% loty experience in zhe scanniti) of vers if made b% munf of a ^c</radus'. if zhey pronounced die wvrdf properly diey wud not mid a gradus.*

X. *I waf wvnce tr^ity tu persuade zhe risponsible hed of wvn of avr largist scoolf tu riform die tiihir^ of Gruk; and I nipon'd divs wizh him: ^cV7ud yoo not sty zhat TEUKEE (TUXTI) u/af a good wvrdfor dii end of an [ambic verse?'*

'certanly/ hi sed; 'a very good wvn:

^cAndyetyco wud sty, no dovt, rfj^PSEUKEE(yuxf)) waf n bad wvn!

'A horrible false quantity/ hi sed.

^el waf well aware zhat yoo wud bi Jhockt at die

SUMMARY

notien,⁹1 repfyd, ^eand yoo wil no davt agree with me that zhe reef on u\$h\$ wvn if good and zhe vzher if bad if zhat zhe vovil in zhe first syllable U oj different speedh'valyie in zhtfe twco wvrdf!

'B § alle enfshi se, ^fdiatt if jvst zhe point, in TEUKEE it if fliort, and in PSEUKEE it if lon>!

'Bvt hew if it zhen, if, afyoo sty, die essential difference between zhefe twoo wvrdf if in -die speeih'valyie oj zheir vouelf, zhat yoo pronounce diem al^ke? if zhey are pronounced al^ke if not wvn af good af ike vzher? and haf not zhe boy whco considerf zhern equivalent got hold of zhe essence of zhe matter, vnderstandir^ more or less ufliat he if about vShen he if wqntity hif versef; ufli^le zhe boy whco obfervef zhe distinction if wvn whco dvef not ihink for himself, nor trvst hif ear, bvt mecanically adopts zhe me enisles ryilef zhat are forced vpon him? And if he if not b% natjir dvll and timid, ufliidh he ihowf svm symptomf of beir^, if not This sort of teeihir^ die very meenf tu cov him and mvddle hif breinf?'

He receevd mj> demonstration cortevsly af an in' geenivs quibble.

XL The yise of zhe Greek quantitiv terminology in expleinin> syllabic or stress'verse imptyef zhat zhe termf are equivalent in die different systemf, or requpef dial

SUMMARY

zhey /hud be pleinly differentiated, it if demonstrable
zhat zhey are not equivalent, and if zhey are different
Hated zhe absvrdity of avplpty The Greek notion? tu
English poetry if patent. Tq zhe inverse experiment of
wqtny Greek verse wizh zhe 'syllabic definition of zlie
classic feet.

XII. *The syllabic system atteind its refvts b% lerned elaboration; and in blank verse zhis elaboration evolv'd so meny fortnf of zhe l%one (af we see in Milton) zhat almost eny profe, ttfhidh manteind a feir sprinklin) of alternat accents, cud be red af blank verse; zhe pyieqle degradation of zlie haphazard decasyllabic ryfltm satis' fpd zhe verse^moker, and eequnly be<jbl'd zhe wiiter of profe, whoo savht after rythmical effect. A clergyman wvnce sympathetically confessst tu me zhat he waf himself b% natjir svmfhirt) of a poet, and zhat zhe con' viction had on wvn occafon been strangely forced vpon him. For after preedhi^ hif first sermon hif rector sed tu him in zhe vestry, ^fDco yoo know zhat yoor sermon waf a/l in blank verse?' 'And, b%' George, it waf (he sed wizh svme pqde); ^ci lookt at it, and it was!' This man had had zhe nfual lott) classical treini% and waf a fellow of hiscolleg.*

XIII. *Tujvdgefrom wvn or twoo examplef l /hud be*

SUMMARY

tempted tu sty rfiat zhe qualification; of an English prosodist m\$it h (i) zh? educated misvnderstandin) of Gmk and Latin verse; (2) n s\natterin) of modern myifi' cnl ry(hm. H/> method (1) tu satisfy himself in zhe dioice of n fiw barrel-organ ryfhm, and (2) tu ixert hif inginyiity in fyndir^ zhem every vShere. The rtfvlt if not likely tu h recommendnble tu n student.

ROBERT BRIDGES

\$5

[The following hitherto unpublished account by Robert Bridges of his Syllabic Free Verse (later called NeoMiltonic Syllabics) is dated Dec. 1923.

Although in manner the note is perhaps a little out of keeping with these examples of his published work, I print it here, after the Letter on Prosody, because this is its proper place from the point of view of subject' matter.

This account of the origin of its metre was written some two years before The Testament of Beauty was definitely begun. A fragment of fourteen lines exists, however—dated Christmas 1924—of which the initial seven lines form the beginning of the poem.]

M. M. B.

'NEW VERSE'

EXPLANATION OF THE PROSODY OF MY LATE SYLLABIC TREE VERSE*

THE reason for my writing this is that the strict construction of the verse is not likely to be understood without my explanation. On its first appearance for instance, there was a long learned account of it in The Times by the Secretary of the British Academy, which was altogether wrong.

The most intelligible and straightforward way of describing it will be to tell by what steps I came at it. So that I will describe its 'genesis'.

When I was revising my Milton's Prosody for its last edition, it struck me that Milton had freed every foot in his blank verse [using the term foot from the analysis of blank verse as a disyllabic metre of five feet] except the last: and that he had done this by excluding extrametrical syllables within the line [the occurrence of such syllables had become common in the dramatic blank verse, as that became more accentual], and that the reason why he had not freed the last foot also was that he allowed it still to carry an extrametrical syllable.

By having freed the feet' I mean that in his metrical system there was no place in which any one syllable was necessarily long or short, accented or unaccented, heavy or light: but this, as I say, did not obtain in the last foot.

It must here be parenthetically questioned whether Milton ever inverted the accent of the last foot. It is a common opinion among critics that in this place (what is called) an accentual trochee 'cannot' take the place of (what they call) an accentual iambus. But good

'NEW VERSE*

examples prove that poets have wished to give this exceptional effect, and it is only necessary to quote one line from Keats:

'Bright star would I 'were stcdfast as thou art!

of which line the intention cannot be questioned: and plenty of examples might be given, and Milton's own practice is at least in doubt: but he certainly ventures it very seldom, and, whether or no he wished to do it, he was forbidden by the allowance which this last foot had in his system to take an extrametrical syllable. A line with an inverted last foot might have read like a line deficient in one syllable with an extrametrical ending.

Seeing then that to free the last foot it was only needed to forbid the terminal extrametrical syllable, and that Milton had, with so great effect, excluded it from every other place in his syllabic verse; it seemed to me that the next step that he would have taken (had he continued his work) would have been to forbid it also in the last place.

I naturally wondered what the effect would be, and determined to experiment on it.

One cannot originate a poem in an unknown metre, for it is familiarity with the frame'work which invites the words into their places, and in this dilemma I happily remembered that I had had for many years a poem in my head which had absolutely refused to take any metrical form. Whenever I had tried to put it into words the metre had ruined it. The whole poem was, so far as feeling and picturing went, complete in my imagination, and I set to work very readily on it, and with intense interest to see what would come. I was delighted to find that the old difficulty of metering it had vanished, and it ran off quite spontaneously to its old title The Flowering Tree, which is dated in my book Nov. 7 1913.

I had written it in sixes, that is in twelves with a caesural break: and

'NEW VERSE*

it was no doubt the subject which led me to choose that form. Having exploited it as I thought successfully, and arrived at very rich and varied rhythms, it was after that single experiment a very definite form of marked effects and possibilities which I could use now at will: or, at least, it was ready within me to receive or reject anything that arose. And on Nov. 28th, when I had been considering whether I would send His Majesty a Christmas Poem to com' memorate my appointment in his household, the poem called Noel appeared on the scene.

'A frosty Christmas Eve' when the stars were shining.¹

This was sent to the King at Christmas, and His Majesty sent it to The Times for publication.

Of that poem I can say that it has won more favour from all classes of people than any other poem that I ever wrote: and since not one of the readers knew how it scanned, it seemed to me that my extension of Milton's rules must be worth something.

As for the novelty of it I may record that my old friend Mackail, a Professor of poetry and a writer of poems, whose learning cannot be questioned, wrote to me, when he read it in The Times, asking 'what is this lovely new metre f

I must interrupt my narrative to remind the reader that I am only writing business and narrating the relevant facts which influenced me.

For some years after this I felt no call to poetry, but in 1921 I had some months of good disposition and wrote many poems; the most of them were in oldfashioned forms. I made however 3 or 4 attempts at this particular metre that I have been describing, all of them expert" ments to discover its relation to rhyme. These are negligible here:

¹ Which I Made walking up and down the "quarter deck* in my garden one winter evening.

'NEW VERSE*

but an experiment in hendecasyllabic verse with a caesura after the 6th place, that is a line of 6+5 instead of 6+6 discovered new effects.¹ My main interest however was in prosecuting my 6+6 successes.

I saw that these twelves, or Alexandrines, had in Milton's practice no title to a fixed caesura. In all his work from earliest to latest he delighted in the Alexandrine without its hemistichs, and here was a promising field of freedom which it was most exciting to explore.

*I had no notion how the thing would hold together when thus apparently freed from all rule. It was plainly the freest of free verse, there being no speech'rhythm which it would not admit; and I saw also that all the old forms of 12'syllable verse, the Greek iambic, the scazon, the French Alexandrine **¶c.**, would be admitted on equal terms. It was partly this wish for liberty to use various tongues that made me address my first experiment to a parrot, but partly also my wish to discover how a low setting of scene and diction would stand; because one of the main limitations of English verse is that its accentual (dot and go one) bumping is apt to make ordinary words ridiculous; and since, on theory at least, there would be no decided enforced accent in any place in this new metre, it seemed that it might possibly afford escape from the limitations spoken of. And thus I wrote Poor Poll. This was printed separately with explanatory notes on the prosody.*

This 12^syllable verse then is written by the rules of Milton's Prosody with only this difference, viz. that it forbids the extra'

¹ *In the poem Mid the squandcr'd colour; in an earlier sketch of which I found some of this metre governing its first spontaneous expressions.*

'NEW VERSE*

metrical syllable at the end of the verse. All its liberties follow logically fr^m that development. The 'elision' of vowels and semivowels is the same as in Milton, and as with him optional; only it is less optional, since it is ruled by speech' practice and not by metrical demands; at least it was my intention that my^c elisions' should be quite natural. I have however extended Milton's elision in one particular, viz., I have considered all the words ending in nation as being now in that condition which must bring them into line with his other semivocalic terminations; they have, that is, in my lines, their speech value = sh'n, which is a truly elidible condition, and can only be forbidden on antiquarian grounds. As Milton and Chaucer would write

the temple and all....

so we may now say

the nation and all... .

There are no doubt a few other semivocalic terminations which have been lightened since Milton's time and are now in the same elidible condition: and if I have sometimes used them they might seem as great an extension of his liberty in liquid elision as nation is. But they are not likely to give the reader any difficulty, or suggest such metrical doubt, as the 'elision of[^](a)tion might.

R.B.

